

THREE QUESTIONS **(Justice Kurian Joseph)**



1. *“Where are you?”*

This is the first question God asked man. God created Paradise for man and He wanted to live with him in that Paradise. The Book of Genesis says that God used to walk with Adam and Eve in the Paradise. He put only one condition: man shall not eat the fruits of the forbidden tree. The crooked and cunning Satan, however, was able to exploit the weak moments of man and convinced him that God did not want man to be like Him and, therefore, He has restrained the man from eating those fruits, and in case he ate them, he would be like God. Man fell into that trap of easily becoming divine, if not becoming easily divine. As a matter of fact, God did not have any selfish motive in preventing man from eating the forbidden fruits. Only because that fruit was the judgment of right and wrong, the decision of which is absolute prerogative of God, He did not want man to

take up that divine task. If man chooses to decide what is right or what is wrong, it is likely to be highly subjective and God did not want any such subjective element on a decision between right and wrong. This, the Satan knew. Satan wanted to create disorder in the society by entrusting each individual the task to take a decision as to what is right and wrong. Unfortunately, the first man became a prey to that temptation to become like God. The moment he knew that he had gone wrong, many realizations one-by-one started troubling him, so much so, that he wanted to cover himself and hide himself. It was at that juncture that God asked the first question to man "*Where are you?*"

God continues to ask that question to each one of us. Are we in a situation or status to stand before Him or are we hiding elsewhere? If we do not confront Him, that means we have to hide our wrongs. He calls us, He comes every moment and so let us come out of our wrong, and be with Him. Jesus tells us that in case we are pure in heart, we will be able to see Him. He abides in holy hearts.

2. *“Where is your brother?”*

This is the second question God asked the man and it was asked to Cane when he came before God without his brother Abel. The answer Cane gave to God was a counter question “Am I the one to guard my brother?”. The moment we answer a question with a counter question, be sure, we are on the wrong. God wants us to take care of our brethren. Each one of us is called to guard our brothers. Jesus reminds us that unless we respect the seen presence of man on earth, there is no point in adoring the unseen God. God created man in His own image. If we ignore our brother and choose to adore God with all our religious practices, those are not acceptable offerings to God. The opportunities which God give us to take care of our brothers and sisters around us, if we do not utilize them, we commit a sin of omission. God presents before us only those possible opportunities which He knows very well that we can utilize them for the upliftment of the people around us. Development of mankind is glorification of God.

3. *“Where are you going?”*

This question does not have a proper Biblical context. In fact, it is from *Quo Vadis*. When St. Peter was cowardly escaping from Rome, he meets Jesus again carrying the Cross. Then St. Peter asked this question “Where are you going?”. Showing all disappointment, Jesus answered that He was going to be crucified again. This question is asked in our conscience every time we go on a wrong path, take wrong decisions, do wrong things or think wrongly. If we are able to listen to that silent voice of God speaking through the Holy Spirit in our conscience, we will not commit mistakes. God does not want us or permit us to commit wrongs and that is why the Spirit warns us when we are leaning towards wrongs. However, out of extreme love, regard and respect for human dignity, God does not want to interfere with the freedom of man’s choice; otherwise man will be His slave. Nor does He want man to be His servant. He wants man to be His friend. The true friend knows the wish or desire of the heart of his beloved and this

is what God wants from us to go on the path He shows. Path to walk is shown to us by the voice of the Spirit spoken in our conscience. We need only listen to that inner voice and make right choice.

If we are able to ask these three questions to ourselves, at least once daily, and follow the answer and make right choices, we will become saints and without this sainthood, while we live on Earth, we cannot and will not, re-enter the Paradise to live forever with Him.

(Justice Kurian Joseph)